

convey the same ideas that I have elsewhere received in so much more clear and direct a vehicle of words ? But then, in what remote corner, placed beyond the authority of criticism and the circulation of literature, where a noble language stagnates into barbarism, did this man study his religion and acquire his phrases ? Or by what inconceivable perversion of taste and of labour has he framed, for the sentiments of his religion, a mode of expression so uncongenial with the eloquence of his country, and so calculated to exclude it from all benefit of that eloquence ? "

My dear friend, if I were not conscious of a most sincere veneration for evangelical religion itself, I should be more afraid to trust myself in making these observations on the usual manner of expressing its ideas. If my description be exaggerated, I am willing to be corrected. But that there is a great and systematical alienation from the true classical diction, is most palpably obvious; and I cannot help regarding it as an unfortunate circumstance. It gives the gospel too much the air of a professional thing, which must have its peculiar cast of phrases, for the mutual recognition of its proficient, in the same manner as other professions, arts, crafts, and mysteries, have theirs. This is officiously placing the singularity of littleness to draw attention to the singularity of greatness, which in the very act it misrepresents and obscures. It is giving an uncouth-ness of mien to a beauty which should attract all hearts. It is teaching a provincial dialect to the rising instructor of a world. It is imposing the guise of a cramped formal ecclesiastic on what is destined for an universal monarch.

Would it not be an improvement in the administration of religion, by discourse and writing, if Christian truth were conveyed in that neutral vehicle of expression which is adapted indifferently to common serious subjects. But it may be made a question whether it *can* be perfectly conveyed in such language. This point therefore requires a little consideration.—The diction on which I have animadverted, may be described under three distinctions.

The first is a peculiar way of using various common words. And this peculiarity consists partly in expressing ideas by such single words as do not simply and directly belong to them, instead of other single words which **do** simply and directly belong to them, and in general